

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. V.

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NEW YEAR HYMN.

Break, New-born Year, on glad eyes break!
Melodious voices move!
On, rolling Time! thou canst not make
The Father cease to love.

The parted year had winged feet;
The Saviour still doth stay:
The New Year comes; but, Spirit sweet,
Thou goest not away!

Lord, from this year more service win,
More glory, more delight!
O make its hours less sad with sin,
Its days with thee more bright!

Then we may bless its precious things
If earthly cheer should come,
Or gladsome mount on angel wings
If thou wouldst take us home.

Oh, golden then the hours must be;
The year must needs be sweet:
Yes, Lord, with happy melody
Thine opening grace we greet.

—T. H. Gill.

THE YOUNG MAN WHO WENT AWAY SORROWFUL.

Wherever the order of strength agrees exactly with the order of worth; wherever the desire known to be the highest is also the most intense, and no brute passion usurps the throne instead of serving as the footstool; wherever the habits are shaped and proportioned by the scale of excellence and beauty within, there strife and sorrow cannot be; there is the glad consent between hand and heart, the concord between our worship and our will which charms away the approach of care. This harmony may be attained in either of two ways, by tuning up the life to the key-note of thought or by letting down the thought to the pitch of the actual life. He who will persistently follow his highest impulses and convictions, who will trust only these amid noisier claims, and constrain himself to go with them alike in their faintness and their might, shall not find his struggle everlasting. His wrestlings shall become fewer and less terrible. The hand of God, so dim to him and doubtful at the first, shall in the end be the only thing that is clear and sure; his best shall be his strongest too. But this, which is a holy peace, is not the only rest open to the contradictions of our nature. There is also an escape from discord by an inverse and descending path. And if a man will steadily follow his strongest impulses, without regard to their vileness or their worth, will give no heed to any whispering compunction, will do only and always what he likes, from him too the jarring and conflict of nature shall pass away. God's spirit will not always strive with him, to turn his wilful steps. The angels that beset his path with entreaty, with protest, with defiance, will thin off

till they are seen no more; he will enjoy a cheerful and comfortable exemption from anything divine, and, by withdrawal of all else, his strongest affections will become his best. So far as mere ease and pleasure are concerned, there is not perhaps much to choose between these two opposite modes of self-reconciliation. If a man resolves to disown the upper region of his nature, he may find entertainment, if that be all, in the lower; and care may be made to fly before the gas-lamps and merriment of the vault, as well as beneath the starlight of the observatory and the silence of the skies. The difference is not sentient but moral between the harmonies of the world above and the enchantments of Circe's isle,—the one a music straying from the gate of heaven and waking the soul to share the vigils of immortals, the other composing it to sleep upon the verge of hell. It was, however, in the nobler way that the young man had established his right to an unanxious life, and attracted the love of Christ: he had conformed his habits to his moral sense, not sunk his moral sense to the level of his habits. What then had happened to disturb the rest arising from their concord?

The truth is, this young ruler had *had* all the content that noble minds can derive from the order of a well-regulated life. He had come to the end of all such satisfactions and found them fairly spent. They had become to him mere negative conditions of repose, without which indeed he would sink into self-contempt, but with which he rose into no self-reverence, and scarce escaped the hauntings of a perpetual penitence. He felt that if this were all,—this, which was but the native path and beaten track of his soul,—the field of duty was no such glorious thing, and some diviner terms might have been asked ere this flat earth should win eternal life. A store of unexhausted power, a pressure toward loftier aspiration, led him to fix an eager eye on Christ, and be ready for intenser work; and to be referred only to the old commands, and sent back to the familiar task, spread the dull shade over his heart again. He had reached the stage of character, which all men as they are more faithful the sooner reach when the conscience breaks out beyond the life and demands a sphere of enterprise larger than the home

domain with all its settled ways. There is, there can be, no list of actions, no scheme of habits, that will permanently represent your duty, and stand as a perpetual diagram of right. Only while it is yet unrealized, while it rises ideally above you, and reproaches your slurred and broken lines of order, is it truly the emblem of your obligations. The moment you overtake it, and fall into coincidence with it, its function is gone, and it guides and teaches you no more; it becomes simply what *you are*, which is always parted by an interval from what you *ought to be*. Moral excellence is a state of the affections, and must be measured by their purity and depth. And in doing merely what is habitual the affections cannot keep awake; they live upon fresh thoughts and demand ever new toils; their eye is intent upon the future, drawn thither by a holy light; and, if once it retires upon the present, it droops into a fatal sleep.

And so it is that there is something truly infinite in duty. It is a region that can never be enclosed; we pitch our tent upon its boundary field, and as we survey it we detect an ampler realm beyond. As the body could, by no far travelling, find a station where the arm might not yet be stretched forth, so the soul can be borne by no progress to a point where the free will shall not take another step. Hence it is evident that, in the mind of all responsible beings, there must be a perpetual alternation between two opposite states of rest and unrest, succeeding and reproducing each other. While the moral conceptions are in clear advance of the actions there is a secret shame which forbids repose; a sense of sorrowful aspiration impels the will to earnest effort, and sends it panting after the divine form that invites it on. At length faith and resolution overtake the image; the interval is conquered, and that which was a vision in the past is a reality of the present. The outer and the inner life concur, and for awhile the healthy joy of a good conscience touches the features with its light. But in this absence of moral confusion, and under the shelter of a sacred peace, the energies of a pure mind, released from severer action, push forward to the seizure of higher thoughts.

Some men you may find whose habits and whose conscience settle down in fixed

partnership for this world, and are never seen diverging,—not, alas! from the agility of their habits, but from the sluggishness of their conscience. Their moral perceptions are absolutely stationary, or show them even less of heaven in their manhood than in their youth. Doing what they think right, and thinking nothing right but what they do, they approve themselves and look up to nothing. They are not, however, exempt from the great law of alternation. Only, its oscillation is dull and slow; and its sweep of rest having occupied this life, its sorrowful return must begin another. In nobler men the period of the soul is quicker. For a while they fulfil their moral aims, and after conquest enjoy the victory; they pitch their tent upon the field, and, not without a glad thanksgiving, accept a brief repose. But high hearts are never long without hearing some new call, some distant clarion of God, even in their dreams; and soon they are observed to break up the camp of ease, and start on some fresh march of faithful service. And to such productive wills the era of rest, like the Creator's Sabbath, is but as a sixth—and that all filled with hallowed hours—to the working days whose morning and evening enclose and reclaim some realm of beauty out of chaos. And finally, looking higher still, we find those who never wait till their moral work accumulates, and who reward resolution with no rest; with whom, therefore, the alternation is instantaneous and constant; who do the good only to see the better, and see the better only to achieve it; who are too meek for transport, too faithful for remorse, too earnest for repose; whose worship is action, and whose action ceaseless aspiration.

This last case, in which the law of alternation has its period reduced to a vanishing interval, fulfils our conception of an angel-mind. To higher natures it belongs to have nothing discordant, nothing intermittent; their thought ever advancing, their will never lingering, the disturbance between them is annihilated as fast as it is created; and with activity more glorious than ours, the substitute for our human periodicity a diviner constancy.—*James Martineau.*

The earnestness of life is the only passport to the satisfaction of life.—*Theodore Parker.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind
 Forgive our foolish ways!
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
 In purer lives thy service find,
 In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust, like theirs who heard
 Beside the Syrian Sea
 The gracious calling of the Lord,
 Let us, like them, without a word
 Rise up and follow thee.

Oh Sabbath rest by Galilee!
 Oh calm of hills above,
 Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
 The silence of eternity
 Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush, subduing all
 Our words and works that drown
 The tender whisper of thy call,
 As noiseless let thy blessing fall
 As fell thy manna down.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
 Till all our strivings cease;
 Take from our souls the strain and stress
 And let our ordered lives confess
 The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
 Thy coolness and thy balm;
 Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
 Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire
 O still, small voice of calm!

—*John G. Whittier.*

Sometimes the soul needs to be put in order before we can do any duty as we ought. If the soul is sick, we shall put no heart into anything we do. To finish any work well, we must have faith, courage, confidence, and be able to put our heart into it. But if the heart is cold and dead, we shall do everything in a cold and dead way. The nearest duty, therefore, may be to take care of our mind, our heart, and our soul; to come into the presence of God, to give ourselves up to him, to begin a new life of obedience, faith, submission, patience, hope,—this may be our nearest duty.

The best way to escape many difficulties which beset us on a lower plane is to go up to a higher one. It is sometimes easier to go up than to stand still where we are. In

climbing a precipitous rock, if you stop you may grow dizzy, and be in danger of falling; but if you push upward, you are safe. So, sometimes, if you find it hard to do your duty, try to *do more*, not less. Adopt a higher standard, go up to a higher ground. There you have more motive, purer air, better inspiration. If it is hard to be a moderately good Christian, try to become a better one; you will often find that easier. To give yourself *wholly* to what is true and good is easier than to halt between two opinions. When you try to compromise between right and wrong, to be *moderately* just, to be truthful to a certain extent, and religious without ceasing to be worldly, it is a hard matter. But if we say, "We will do *whatsoever* things are just, *whatsoever* things are true, *whatsoever* things are noble, it simplifies the matter.—James Freeman Clarke, in *Messages of Faith, Hope, and Love*."

THAT WE PUT OUR TRUST WHOLLY IN GOD.

O Lord God, thou art our refuge and our hope! On thee alone we rest; for we find all to be weak and insufficient but thee. Many friends cannot profit, nor strong helpers assist, nor prudent counsellors advise, nor the books of the learned afford comfort, nor any precious substance deliver, nor any place give shelter, unless thou thyself dost assist, strengthen, console, instruct, and guard us. To thee, therefore, do we lift up our eyes; in thee, our God, the Father of Mercies, do we put our trust. Bless and sanctify our souls that they may become thy holy habitation, and the seat of thine eternal glory; and let nothing be found in us displeasing in thy sight. Protect and keep us amidst all dangers, and, accompanying us by thy grace, direct us along the way of peace to thine everlasting home. Amen.—*Martineau's Service Book*.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

We are not told how long Jesus remained in Capernaum, at this time (after the Transfiguration, and the conversations recorded in the last lesson), but it could not have been long, for it was imperative to avoid the neighborhood of Herod Antipas.

There is now a very curious and interest-

ing feature of the narrative. We have been tracing incidents which are recorded (for the most part) in all three synoptic gospels. But the section from Luke x. to xviii. 14 stands entirely alone. This adds to the difficulty of fixing dates and chronological sequence.

But what is worth noting is, that John mentions three visits of Jesus to Jerusalem after the period which we have been considering. And on two of these visits there is an indication that Jesus had been living in the region east of the Jordan, and returned thither when he left Jerusalem. There is another journey,—to Bethany, for the raising of Lazarus,—though not to Jerusalem. And, while John records that Jesus appeared three times at Jerusalem, Luke three times mentions a journey *toward* Jerusalem.

It has, therefore, been thought probable by some students that the three journeys agree in time with the three visits.

It seems probable that Jesus, after leaving Capernaum, remained some time in Perea (the northern part of the wilderness beyond Jordan); that the events and conversations related in this unique section of Luke took place in Perea; and that during this time he made three visits to Jerusalem and one to Bethany. The visit at Bethany in Luke xi. seems to have been a short stay, during a journey (see verse 18, "it came to pass, as they went").

We might perhaps call the Gospel of Luke the Perean gospel; as that of John treats of the Jerusalem ministry, and those of Mark and Matthew of the Galilean ministry; Mark dealing more especially with the incidents of the life of Jesus, and Matthew with the discourses.

The Gospel of Luke therefore supplies—in these nine chapters—the link between the narratives of Mark and Matthew and that of John; there would otherwise be a gap in the history. So these chapters have an especial importance and interest.

In a certain sense these three journeys may be regarded as one. And Luke evidently has this feeling. The period of the Galilean ministry was ended; and during all the coming months the face of Jesus was "steadfastly set" toward Jerusalem.

It becomes a question, since Luke is now the only historian, whether the other disciples were with Jesus. They must have

accompanied him for a time; for, after leaving Capernaum and entering Samaria, occurs the incident of James and John desiring to call down fire from heaven on the inhospitable Samaritan village.

The most interesting characteristic of Luke's gospel is that he seems to have a better understanding of the aims and ideas of Jesus than do either Matthew or Mark. The first two evangelists relate words and incidents without seeming to understand the central thoughts of Jesus. But in Luke we see certain governing ideas constantly brought out. And it is to Luke that we owe the parables of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, which may be said to contain the very kernel of the gospel of Jesus. Luke alone tells us the story of the Pharisee and the publican; the story of the sinful woman who anointed the feet of Jesus; the story of Dives and Lazarus; the story of Zaccheus the publican. These stories have a common element, bringing out strongly the universal fatherly love of God for Jew and Gentile, Samaritan and publican, the good man and the sinner.

Luke was the friend of Paul, and his companion in his journeys. It is thought that he may have collected some of the materials for this gospel while Paul was in prison at Cæsarea. If so, to Paul's imprisonment we may owe the story of the visit of Jesus to the Temple at twelve years old; the account of the preaching in Nazareth and rejection by the Nazarene villagers; the raising of the widow's son at Nain, etc.

It has also been suggested that Luke was one of the seventy; and was possibly the companion of Jesus in Perea. Hence the chapters, Luke x. to xviii., with the inestimable treasure of the parables of the Prodigal Son and of the Good Samaritan, and other passages scarcely less precious.

Here is a list of the subjects treated in these chapters, peculiar to Luke.

X. The appointing of the seventy, and the missionary sermon with which they were sent out. The sorrowful lament over Chorazin and Bethsaide. Parable of the Good Samaritan. Visit to Bethany.

XI. The Lord's Prayer. Casting out the dumb devil, and the discourse that followed. "Woe unto you, Pharisees!"

XII. Missionary preaching. The rich man. "Take no thought."

XIII. The Galileans. Parable of the fig-tree. Healing the woman "bowed together." Kingdom of heaven: mustard-seed and leaven. "That fox."

XIV. The man with the dropsy. Parable of the wedding-feast. Parable of the great supper.

XV. The prodigal son.

XVI. The unjust steward. Lazarus and the rich man.

XVII. Forgiveness: "Lord, increase our faith!" The ten lepers. "The kingdom of God is within you." "As it was in the days of Noah."

XVIII. The widow and the judge. The Pharisee and the publican. Blessing little children. The young man who went away sorrowful. The blind man.

If we read these chapters, we shall notice that a large part of them consist of sermons and parables. The sadness of the language addressed to the Pharisee has been strangely regarded as "denunciation." In Sharpe's translation from Griesbach's text, the expression, "Woe unto you," is translated "*Alas* for you"; and this is probably a better rendering. In the German Bible the phrase used is "*Wehe* Euch"; and "*Weh*" or "*Wehe*" used in this exclamatory way is rendered in English, "*Alas!*" as is well known to readers of German (it is often used in common conversation). There is, moreover, one passage where it is *impossible* that this should be a denunciation. (Matt. xxiv. 19, Mark xiii. 17, Luke xxi. 23).

The story of the young man who "went away sorrowful," seems to belong to this period of the life of Jesus. But it is fortunately repeated in the two other synoptics, and thus does not belong to the independent section, but directly follows it. This story has caused so much discussion that it seems worth while to give it special attention; and we print, therefore, in this number of our paper, an extract from Martineau's fine sermon on this subject. We will also call the attention of students to the passage in Matthew, which differs from the corresponding introductory sentences in Mark and Luke. In the old version these are practically the same, giving the question of the young "ruler," and the answer of Jesus, in the same form. In the revised version

there is an important correction to the passage in Matthew. It now stands thus: "Master, what *good thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him: Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there is who is good; but if thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments."

If any student of the New Testament feels an interest in knowing the reasons for this alteration we will gladly give them in a succeeding number.

L. F. C.

(Address questions to Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.)

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Magazines.

Popular Science (complete), 1891; *Century* (December missing), 1883; *Harper's Monthly*, 1896; *McClure* (February missing), 1895; *McClure*, 1896; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1895, 1896.

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Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Will our friends kindly send their *odd* magazines directly, instead of asking us to print offers of these? There are often requests from those who could make good use of them. For instance, Rev. B. C. Hammond, Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and several requests have been printed from those who distribute reading in mining regions. Please read your *Cheerful Letter*, dear friends. Each branch should keep a file for reference.

It has been several months since I have made a request for any reading matter through the *Cheerful Letter*; and how I have missed it! I would be so grateful for any historical books, especially any on Napoleon, as several around here wish to read of Napoleon, and are not able to buy. I will lend all that is sent me to others. I am also especially anxious to receive "St. Elmo" and the "Life of General Grant." I would also be glad to receive some books suitable for children between seven and fourteen

years of age, which I will distribute among them. Miss Lula B. Bailey, Waugh, Bedford County, Virginia.

(Do not distribute the books you receive, but lend them.)

I am teaching in the country where there are several parents who do not send their children to school on account of being unable to procure books for them, and would be glad to receive any of the following books: Holmes's "Readers"; Sanford's "Arithmetics" or "Algebra"; Hanesell's "Histories (United States)"; Horbey's "English Grammar"; Maury's "Geographies"; Steele's "Abridged Physiologies"; Harrington's "Spellers"; and Webster's or Worcester's "Dictionaries." C. C. Wright, Straw, North Carolina.

(It is hardly probable that exactly the school books you need will happen to be among the books for distribution.)

Mrs. Flora Sanders, the mother of four little girls, the oldest eight years old, would like to receive school-books for them. First and second readers and spellers. She would also like reading for herself. She lives in the country where it is impossible to procure books, and deserves help as she is very poor. Three of the little girls are going to the public school. Address Mrs. Flora Sanders, The Hollow, Virginia.

Mrs. Annie B. Hiatt, Mountville, Morgan County, Ohio, asks for Whittier's and Longfellow's "Poems" and *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Mrs. Mary E. Stovall, Glade Springs, Virginia, asks for "Swiss Family Robinson" for her grandson.

Mrs. James Newcomb, Sayers, Texas, will be very grateful for "Marcella," Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and current numbers of "Babyhood."

Mrs. George Grimes, Edwall, Lincoln County, Wash., will be glad to receive reading for herself and three boys from ten to fifteen years of age. Mrs. Grimes lost her only daughter two years ago under very painful circumstances. The girl fell on the ice injuring her hip, and after five months of fearful suffering she died. Good reading will comfort and cheer them.

I am the wife of a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. My husband has a country work, and consequently is away from home a great deal. We have four children: Lucian, Mary Julia, Moody, and Laurie, aged seven, five, three, and one. Lucian and Mary Julia can both read, and are very fond of stories. I should be so glad to receive some story books suitable for them. I should also be thankful for the *Ladies' Home Journal* after some one has read it. Will be glad to pay postage on books and *Home Journal*. Mrs. J. B. Nicholson, Whitewright, Texas.

Mrs. Catherine Murray, Perry, Oklahoma, asks for books on "English Literature."

Good reading will be thankfully received by Mrs. W. P. Morris, Royal, Franklin County, North Carolina. Mrs. Morris has a large family and is not able to buy books.

My last request in *The Cheerful Letter* brought me in much good reading. If I only had the stamps I could make others happy. There were some that sent me reading that failed to enclose a card, so I wish to thank them through *The Cheerful Letter*, and assure them that what they sent was appreciated very much indeed. Thomas F. Lockhart, Wellington, Missouri.

(Can you not lend the books in your own neighborhood?)

I am eighteen years old, have four brothers, and one sister married. We live in a float-house on Puget Sound. Our house rises and falls with the tide. I do not go to school, I had to stop school on account of poor health. I am a member of the Christian Church. We have Sunday-school and church every Sunday, also young people's meeting. I should like to correspond with some young person near my own age. I do not know hardly what my favorite books are; I like any good and interesting reading. I am taking lessons on the organ; am getting so I can play quite well. I should be delighted to receive any instrumental music. Address Miss Della Carter, 326 Third Street, Olympia, Washington.

I live in the country when at home, but just now we are living in the city of San Diego for the purpose of having papa

treated. He has been in poor health for a long time, but had a stroke of palsy about one year and a half ago. Since then he has been confined to the house all the time and suffers a great deal.

We have lived way up in the mountains for the last six years in a pretty little valley, all by ourselves. We went to school on a donkey about three miles up a steep mountain trail. We had great times, hunting ferns and flowers. Some times brother John would kill game. Once he shot a deer.

We are not able to buy books just now, and would be glad if some kind friend could send us some. Mamma has received a few books through *The Cheerful Letter*. We three older children enjoy Miss Alcott's and Mrs. Burnett's works very much. Papa is a veteran of the late war, and we enjoy war stories also. Mamma likes E. P. Roe's works. I should like a dictionary with the vowels marked. With best wishes, Lulu Dana, 344 Fifteenth Street, San Diego, California.

(Next time you write give us your age.)

My mother is a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange; and, being election day and a holiday from school, I thought I would write my first letter to you. On Sundays we go to the Episcopal Sunday-school. I wonder if any little boy or girl ever had such a funny dog as our Fido. When I was at school, he tore up my book which Miss Mary P. Austin sent me in 1894 for a Christmas present. The name of my book was "Rosy Cheeks." Will some one please send me some little story books and *Every Other Sunday*? My sister Jessie is five years old, Frank eleven, and I am seven. Bertha Oades, Olympia, Wash.

I am a young girl seventeen years old. I have a mother, and one sister older. Father died last summer, leaving us so sad and lonely. We lead a very lonely and secluded life far out in the country, and are not able to enjoy a great many advantages and comforts that we should like. We have no church very near, and only a poor school. I wish to attend school this fall, but cannot buy the books necessary. We are all fond of good reading, and anything sent would be gladly accepted. Address Miss Frankie M. McFadden, Somerville, Tennessee.

I am only ten years old, but thought I would write a letter for *The Cheerful Letter*. A kind lady sends it to mamma. Papa died last May. Mamma is lame, has to walk with a crutch.

I go to school and Sunday-school, and belong to the "Junior Endeavor Society." We should be glad to get good reading. Izzie Maud Cline, Packwaukee, Wisconsin.

I am fourteen years, and live in town. I have two sisters and three brothers: Perry, twelve years old; Grace, nine; Robert, seven; Ira, six; Clarinda, three. I do not go to school because I am an invalid and cannot study very much. We go to the Methodist Church. I like to read very much, but we are poor and cannot afford to buy much reading. Will some one please send me "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and the *Youth's Companion*, or any good reading? Mary Campbell, care of Mrs. Robert Campbell, Atlantic, Iowa.

I am sixteen years old. I live in the Indian Territory, with my father, on a farm. We have not made a crop to speak of for two years, and we depend wholly on our crops for everything. I have three brothers and a sister younger than I am, and we are all fond of reading. If you could send us some books, they would be thankfully received. Address Eugene McDonald, Ryan, Indian Territory.

(You had better write to our Secretary, and ask for a correspondent).

I wish to thank the many kind people who have sent reading, and helped my children and me to pass away a lonely time. The children drive off the cattle in the morning, and do not return till evening, and I am all alone. The wind blows so I can neither knit nor sew, and rattlesnakes are so bad around here I am afraid to walk anywhere. My days used to be spent in gazing in the direction the children went until my head and eyes ached, but now nearly every week brings me something new to read and the time is not near so dreary. And when the children come we have something pleasant and instructive to talk over. I may have disappointed some people by not answering their cards. But somehow the men who bring my mail neglect the cards. Letters and packages come care-

fully, but cards they consider of no importance. They tell me they are all right and they will bring them next time, but as each one brings my provisions and mail in his turn, "next time" is pretty far off. I am very sorry for this. I am so very thankful for the reading. Some one sent two numbers of *Ladies' Home Journal*. Perhaps a card of acknowledgment is expected. If so, it is among those forgotten ones which I will answer as soon as I get them. Very gratefully yours, Annie T. Hughes, Waterloo, Oklahoma.

I am twelve years of age. I have one sister and one brother. I go to school every day that I can. I have to walk two miles to school. The schoolhouse is situated in town. I am very fond of books, especially tales of adventure. (We have a library at school, but I have read all the books.) I will be very thankful for them. If they are already asked for, send me some other good books. Yours sincerely, Charles Stenglein, Waterloo, Nebraska.

Albert Canning, the seventeen-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Canning, of the East-side, died yesterday, at twelve o'clock, at his home near Ayer's Hill. He has been a sufferer from dropsy for a number of years, his life being sometimes despaired of; but he has been steadily able to withstand the attacks of the disease. Last Wednesday he was taken with an attack that ended in his death yesterday at noon. His father and brothers, Bruce and Marion, are on their ranch at Summit. His mother and baby brother were alone with him. Albert was often cheered in his illness by his many *Cheerful Letter* friends. The snow and rain have been rather severe on us. Mail has been detained on account of the storm. Frankie and Bertha are attending the public school. Jessie is too young. I have been reading Henry Ward Beecher on the late Rebellion,—I mean the American Rebellion. I enjoyed it very much. My father's brothers fought for the South, my mother's brothers for the Union. I must close by wishing you a Merry Christmas. Sincerely, (Mrs.) M. E. Oades, corner Central and Eighth Streets, Olympia, Wash.

The address of Mrs. E. M. Backus, formerly High Point, North Carolina, and

then Saluda, North Carolina, has been changed to Grovetown, Columbia County, Georgia.

The Book Club receives each month a great many offers of light fiction,—books which are not precisely hurtful, but are not the sort to offer here, since many of our readers are very young, and many others ask for books not knowing from the title what is the subject of the book. For instance, many requests came for "The Little Minister" written under the impression that it was the story of a pious, religious little boy, who did missionary work. Send your sensational fiction to the mining camps. There are several requests from these. We are obliged now to erase offers of almost all novels which are unknown to us. Standard fiction, history, and educational books we are glad to offer. Average children's books may be sent directly to Sunday-school teachers and families who ask for them.—N.B. Read the requests.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.]

The question is continually upon my mind and my heart how to keep the confidence of my little child. I see so many children as they grow in years grow away from their parents, seeming to live their lives so apart that it is painful to see their lack of sympathy for each other in the "inner life," the "life of the soul." How far the mother is responsible for this in her dealing with the child mind while it is young and plastic would be hard to determine, with the many outside influences that are continually at work. But in the little affairs of every day this work must be done.

My little boy is very fond of lighting matches, and of playing with lighted sticks from the fire, the danger of which I've tried to impress upon him. Yesterday evening he was playing with a little box of patches and trinkets and I asked him to show mamma his pretties, but he seemed not to wish to let me see what he had. I said, "Do you not love mamma?" "Yes mamma, I love you." "But you don't love me very much else you'd show me your pretties." He then laid out the patches for me to look at, but I

could see that he was holding something back. I said once more, "Do you love me very much?" He put his arms around my neck and held me very close but still he did not give up his secret.

After he had gone to bed I looked and found a little bunch of matches in the very bottom of the other treasures. I left them there hoping the morning would bring some way out of the difficulty. And sure enough in the morning we had occasion to light a match and the little boy begged to be allowed to fill the safe. I then said, "Yes, dear, and if you know of any matches that are out of their place bring them now and put them into the safe." After a while I said, "Now, dear, tell me what it was that you had in your box last night." He leaned up against me with the match safe still in hand and whispered softly, "It is in here, mamma." Now if I'd compelled him to tell me what he was hiding from me in the evening, or had taken the matches away after he had gone to bed, I think our hearts would have been not quite so closely bound as they are to-day.

MRS. A. F. EDWARDS.

It would seem that Mrs. Edwards acted very wisely in leaving the matches in the box for future development. She will much more surely gain her child's confidence by gentleness than force.

To keep the confidence of one's child, one must not be too ready to find fault nor to blame for misdoings. This does not mean that a child should not be reminded of his faults, but it should be done with love and patience, and during a quiet talk, not always at the moment an evil occurs. Then, too, a mother should be in sympathy with her child's interests. The child finds a bit of broken china or faded flower which pleases him; the mother thoughtlessly says, "Oh, that is only an old thing, throw it away." She at once loses ground, and he will not be so ready to bring her his next treasure.

We must remember that many things which seem trifles to us, have much more value for the little ones.

Any further suggestions on this subject will be very acceptable.

Query. Might not the matches have set fire to the house?

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Send all matter for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.]

A pleasant game for winter evenings is played in this way: One person thinks of a word of six letters and then tells the rest of the company the first three letters; the last three must be guessed by the others. It is often amusing to see how many different words may be made without guessing the right one. For instance, *crete* might be given, and the answers might be "create," or "creeds," or "crests," or in fact many other words, until the right one, "creole" was guessed.

CONUNDRUMS.

What did winter say to the flower when he wooed her?

Where have you the most extensive view?

Make a correct sentence of the following:

c c

s i

AUTHORS' NAMES.

1. A prefix and a disease.
2. Brighter and smarter than the other one.
3. Meat, what are you doing?
4. What did a father say to his son while eating?
5. A chain of hills containing a treasure.
6. A lion's home where there is no water.
7. Makes and mends for first-class customers.
8. Represents the dwellings in civilized countries.
9. A kind of linen.
10. Can be worn on the head.
11. Not one of the points of the compass, but inclined towards one.
12. Belongs to a monastery.
13. A girl's name and a male relation.
14. Something more than a sandy shore.
15. Is a worker in precious metals.
16. A very vital part of the body.
17. Small talk, and a heavy weight.

My first a useful vessel is for holding food;
My next is all men's lot, both bad and good;
My third doth history's framework keep in place;

My whole aspires to rise above his mates
 As President of these United States.

S. F. C.

A GOOD BOOK.

FROM "JEANNETTE'S CISTERNS," BY
LYNDE PALMER.

"Now, Rosamond, let us get at the root of the matter. Is it anything wrong to be social, and wish to entertain our friends?"

"Oh, no, I am sure not," said Rosamond; "we are to be 'given to hospitality,' you know; and the Lord himself went to weddings and dinners."

"Well, why is it that we are not allowed to have more satisfaction in it? why is it always arranged that something shall go wrong, and take every bit of pleasure out of it?"

"Why, it isn't," said Rosamond, with a little frown of perplexity. "There is no malicious fate continually working to thwart us; we *are* allowed—as you call it—to have great pleasure in such an evening as this, and when we find ourselves unhappy instead,—I will only speak for myself, Jeannette,—I can always trace the trouble to something wrong in the—"

"Oh, in 'the midst,'—always that bothersome 'midst!'" said Jeannette, petulantly. "Don't let us talk about that to-night. I want to ask you a question, Rosamond; I know you will think it is silly, but you are a true, honest friend, and I can trust you. Tell me,—was I awkward or ill at ease to-night? It was all so new to me; but I should so like everybody to think me lady-like and well-bred."

Rosamond looked at her with a sweet wistfulness. "You always appear well to me, Jeannette," she said; "but why do you care so very much what people are thinking of you? The praise of the whole world couldn't make one really happy."

"But more people than I have made the mistake of thinking so," said Jeannette, a little vexed. "I ought not to have spoken to you, however; you cannot possibly understand my feelings. You and Donald both were born without a spark of ambition."

"I will not speak of myself," said Rosamond, with simple dignity, "but I *will* say that Donald is the most ambitious man I ever knew,—he has a grand and consuming ambition."

"He has!" exclaimed Jeannette. "I never suspected it. Could you tell me about it, Rosamond, or is it a secret?"

"Every one ought to know it who has ever been with him an hour," said Rosamond, proudly: "his great ambition is to be one of 'the children of the Highest,'—of the *Highest*, Jeannette, nothing less would satisfy him."

"It is every word true," cried Jeannette, impulsively, "and I ought to have known what you meant. But these things are all such a mystery to me. How Donald can find much comfort in trying to help everybody and getting so little in return, I am sure I cannot see. People have so little gratitude,—they take everything as a matter of course, and hardly throw him a 'thank you.'"

"Donald does not mind what the people are," said Rosamond, still with the same sweet dignity. "He wants to be one of the children of the Highest," she repeated, "who makes the sun of his love to rise upon the good and the evil, and the rain of his wisdom to fall upon the just and the unjust. Donald does not need anybody's thanks,—he is the happiest person I ever saw."

Rosamond spoke with more spirit than Jeannette had ever known her to manifest. She stopped in the midst of taking down her heavy braids, and ran over to embrace her.

"You must forgive me, Rosamond," she said, "and no matter how foolish and weak I am, you must always believe I love and admire Donald just as much as you do. And you think that he, at least, then, was happy here to-night?"

"I am sure of it," nodded Rosamond. "But if he had come here thinking how wise, and fine-looking, and graceful, and superior he was,—all in a fever of self-love for fear everybody should not recognize it, and pay him all the respect that was his due,—he would have had no end of small mortifications and disappointments; something would have been sure to go wrong,—something always does for such people,—and he would have been vexed and disgusted with himself and everybody else. But Donald is far grander than that; the kingdom of God is within him. Yes, it is all there, Jeannette, as he told us,—the temple, and the wise, bright city, and the living river running through all the land. And so, of course, every thought is alive; he cannot help acting as he does. And also, of course,

there must be great satisfaction in his heart; there must be lovely fruit on every tree."

"Why, you are positively eloquent," said Jeannette; "and in your own wise way," she added, with slightly flushed cheeks, "you have let me know very plainly what you think is the source of my discontent. Don't say a word," as Rosamond lifted her hands in deprecation, "it was very cleverly done, and you are more than half right, no doubt. But I want to ask you something, Rosamond, that has troubled me ever since I was a little child. Now don't be shocked, but doesn't God himself like some recognition of his grandeur? And didn't he want his friends to be with him that they might behold his glory? And doesn't the catechism say that God made you and all things just for his own glory?"

"Oh, you don't understand it," said Rosamond, hastily, "you have such an earthly idea of it. I have always thought there ought to be another question in the catechism,—'What is God's glory?'—and part of the answer certainly would be, 'The highest happiness of all his creatures.'"

"Oh, you say so," said Jeannette, "but you have nothing to prove it."

"I will give you three proofs upon the spot," said Rosamond, earnestly. "When Moses prayed to God that he would show him his glory, he made all his *goodness* to pass before him. When the Lord said to Mary and Martha 'Said I not if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God,' he turned and raised Lazarus. And at the time of the giving of the greatest, the unspeakable gift, all the wise angels, who understood the heart of the Father, sang, 'Glory to God in the highest.' So, you see, whatever else God's glory may include, it certainly must mean giving happiness and blessedness to others."

"That does seem reasonable," said Jeannette, "and I like it. And it seems quite fitting and kingly that God should give in this way; but don't you think it rather hard to expect poor, weak human creatures to keep up to this grand pitch,—always giving and giving, without ever having any of the satisfaction of that sweet selfish happiness?"

"Why, it isn't expected,—you are certainly mentally cross-eyed to-night," laughed Rosamond. "You don't see anything straight. You persist in imagining

God is opposed to our happiness, when he is only trying to show us the shortest possible way to get to it. He wishes us to give because it is a heavenly law that giving will so enlarge and develop us that we may receive infinitely more than we dreamed. He does not wish always to thwart our desires, but only to tell us what must come *first*, in order to insure the most happiness in every part of our nature. It would be so very unfortunate, if we got the lowest thing uppermost, you know, like people trying to stand on their heads. No, this is the conclusion of the whole matter: seek *first* the kingdom and all these other things will be added, this sweet self-happiness, in a way that, I think, will surprise you."

"Ah, well," sighed Jeannette, turning out the light, and arranging the mosquito netting, "hasn't this been an odd talk for two young girls after a party? I don't know why it is. I don't want to think of these things; but sometimes I find them waiting for me, and I can no more get away from them than the 'wedding guest' could from the 'ancient mariner.' I have to hear it all. And I know every word you said is true, Rosamond. I see it more clearly than you think; and I should truly like to do a little good in the world. . . . I will tell you all about it some time. But good night now, dear, bright, little city of wisdom; it is too late to talk any more."

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

The address of Mrs. Kate Noftoger has been changed from Pasadena, Texas, to Houston, Texas. The address of Mrs. Julia Morgan has been changed from Dunlor, Wash., to Lacrosse, Wash. (Washington is the only State which should be written in the abbreviated form, thus: Wash. Write out in full all others.)

The change of address sent by Mrs. K. D. Stafford, was printed once before, but we will repeat it. It was formerly Bradford, Texas; now Pine Grove, Henderson County, Texas.

Mrs. Mabel H. Taylor, New Kamilche, Wash., desires to say to the kind friends who inquired after her at the October meeting, that she has been ill during the sum-

mer, and with household duties and the care of children, found herself unable to answer letters. She sends thanks to all for their kindly interest.

(Mrs. Taylor has eight children, the eldest ten years old; the youngest born this autumn.)

ANSWERS TO LETTERS.

"Has *The Cheerful Letter* organization sent anything lately to Mrs. —?"

The Cheerful Letter organization never sends anything to any one. The different Branches and individuals often send books and papers; the sending of any other articles is not *Cheerful Letter* Exchange work, and it is against our rule to ask for anything but books. It is of the greatest importance that what is sent should be reported to our Book Club Secretary.

"I wish to send thanks to the following people who have sent me books. . . Will you print this in *The Cheerful Letter*?"

It is impossible. The object of *The Cheerful Letter* is not to print notes of thanks to each individual who sends a book. If a card is enclosed with a book, it must be used to return thanks. If none is enclosed, the thanks must go unrecorded. If the paper were used for this purpose, there would be room in it for nothing else.

"I have written to you twice, asking for books on your list, and as I have never received a book, nor a word of any kind, I write asking you to let me know if you have received my letters, and why I have never heard from you. Please let me hear from you. If you cannot send anything, let me know why, please."

When writers do not receive the books for which they ask, it is, no doubt, because they have already been given to some one else. As to writing to explain *why* they are not sent, it is unreasonable to ask it and entirely impossible to do so.

This is the daily exercise of the Christian: to utter faithfully, by action and word, his convictions in the presence of those who do not share them,—to testify to the truth, whether men will hear or forbear.

Let us try to live with the living as we shall wish we had when we call them living no longer.

For it is life, and not death, which determines character, and creates for us our heavens or our hells.

"One must try to get into other people's minds, must try to look objectively at the world's events, if one would attain to anything like philosophy. I don't mean that we are to think and feel as those do whom we contemplate; far from it. But we must try to understand them a little."—*From the Letters of J. L. Motley.*

I find God made known as he is manifested in man. We say a great deal about the manifestation of God in Nature, as he reveals himself in the forces and arrangements of the outer world; and this is well. But, after all, I cannot help believing that our best conceptions of God come through the men and women who have been so related to the life of God that they have been enabled to tell us something about him in and through their own lives.—*Rev. Francis B. Hornbrooke, "In Spirit and in Truth."*

THE IMITABLENESS OF JESUS.—Whatever be our reverence for Jesus, even though it attribute to him a nature ever so extraordinary and exalted, still we must remember that he is presented to us as the great ideal, model, example, of all that we should be. We must not look upon him as a magisterial instructor, as a mere official teacher. The words Messiah, Mediator, Redeemer, lead us too much to think merely of office and law and dispensation. But no: a living, loving heart breathed itself out in the call, "Come unto me, come to me, and I will give you rest." And that call is as vital now and as needful now as it ever was. Let us understand, then, but this: that here was a being filled with the divinest goodness and sanctity; that he held in the bosom of his own experience a treasure of inexpressible value to us; that *he* knew the secret of all welfare, and that for us to know it is worth more than life; that it *is* life, peace, joy, blessedness unbounded and everlasting. And then I ask, what call of his, what exhortation, what word of entreaty, could be too tender or earnest or urgent?—*Orville Dewey, D.D.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, February 5, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

The Treasurer takes this opportunity to notify subscribers that many subscriptions are overdue; and, as our treasury is quite low, she will esteem it a favor if members will kindly send her their subscriptions.

Please observe that the price of one subscription, fifty cents, may be sent by mail for the postage of an ordinary letter (two cents), but a silver half-dollar should be protected by being wrapped in soft paper. N.B.—Subscriptions may be left at 25 Beacon Street at any time. (See Directions.)

Will any minister who receives this paper do us the favor to send to our secretary names of lonely people living in places remote from schools, libraries, and churches, especially mothers living on ranches or prairies, young people without means of education, and invalids, whether grown-up people or children.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,—when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

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